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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/612,521	07/02/2003	Cheryl E. Zemont	0502.003	5288

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EXAMINER

BROWN, MICHAEL A

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3764

DATE MAILED: 01/09/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/612,521

Applicant(s)

ZEMONT, CHERYL E.

Examiner

Michael Brown

Art Unit

3764

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 21 October 2005.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1,2,4,5,13,14,16,17,20 and 21 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-2, 4-5, 13-14, 16-17 and 20-21 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-2, 4-5, 13-14, 16-17 and 20-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cassidy in view of Mauch EP '958, along with Sakai.

Cassidy discloses in figures 1-2 a method for performing a trigger-point massage and a trigger-point therapy device, substantially as claimed. However, Cassidy does not disclose the device being made of plastic, the nodes (a) being cylindrical with flat ends, the nodes being between one half inch in both diameter and length or a rigid press fit between a rigid pin and the node. Mauch EP '958 teaches in figures 1-2 a method of performing a trigger-point massage and a trigger-point therapy device comprising a spherical ball 1 having nodes 3 that are cylindrical (fig. 1) and have flat ends (fig. 2). The nodes 3 are made of plastic. Sakai teaches in figures 1-22 nodes 1 that are between one half inch in length (2.5 cm is between ½ inch and 1 inch) and between ½ inch and one inch in diameter, (2.5 cm, col. 5, lines 18-25). It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time that the invention was made that the cylindrical nodes having flat ends as taught by Mauch could be substituted for the spherical shaped nodes disclosed by Cassidy in order to use the flat portion of the nodes to massage the trigger-point on the body. The plastic material is a

Art Unit: 3764

pliable material (resilient) that would allow the user's to massage the trigger-point without chafing that portion of the skin on the body. The nodes could be constructed to be between one half to one inch in length and diameter as taught by Sakai in order to apply a specific pressure at a specific pressure point. Sakai, also teaches a rigid pin 14' that is in a press fit with the node (the pin is pressed downward to screw it into the node).

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed October 21, 2005 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant argues that the prior art doesn't or suggest a trigger therapy device or method of the using such a device. However, Cassidy discloses a massaging ball that has nodes. Clearly theses nodes are pressed against pressure points on the body. Sakai was used as a modifier to construct the nodes of the same length and diameters as recited in the claims of the present invention. Applicant argues that the prior art doesn't disclose an array of 8 to 14 nodes. However, Cassidy discloses enough nodes to have an array of 8 to 14 nodes. Applicant argues that Sakai doesn't provide any motivation or suggest to construct the nodes between one half inch to one inch. However, Sakai clearly teaches (col. 5, lines 18-25) that the nodes can be between one half inch to one inch. Applicant argues that the nodes have to be spaced apart a certain distance in order to localize pressure at trigger points. However, the spacing between the nodes disclosed by Cassidy is capable of localizing pressure at trigger points.

Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the mailing date of this final action.

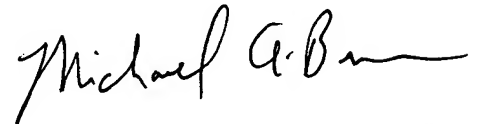
Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Michael Brown whose telephone number is 571-272-4972. The examiner can normally be reached on 5:30 am-4:00 pm Monday-Thursday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Gergory Huson can be reached on 571-272-4887. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 3764

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

M. Brown
January 4, 2005

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael A. Brown". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

MICHAEL A. BROWN
PRIMARY EXAMINER